St. Francis (10 6 10 6. 8 8 4)

Composed for “Church Hymns with Tunes”, S.P.C.K., 1874.

1  O Father, Thou Who hast created all
   In wisest love, we pray,
   Look on this babe, who at Thy gracious call
   Is entering on life’s way;
   Bend o’er him in Thy tenderness,
   Thy image on his soul impress;
   O Father, hear!

2  O Son of God, who diedst for us, behold,
   We bring our child to Thee;
   Thou tender Shepherd, take him to Thy fold,
   Thine own for aye to be;
   Defend him through this earthly strife,
   And lead him on the path of life,
   O Son of God!

3  O Holy Ghost, Who broodest o’er the wave,
   Descend upon this child;
   Give him undying life, his spirit lave
   With waters undefiled;
   Grant him, while yet a babe, to be
   A child of God, a home for Thee,
   O Holy Ghost!

4  O Triune God, what Thou command’st is done;
   We speak, but Thine the might;
   This child has scarce yet seen our earthly sun,
   Yet pour on him Thy light,
   In faith and hope, in joy and love,
   Thou Sun of all below, above,
   O Triune God! Amen.

Catherine Winkworth, 1827 - 78,
from the German of A. Knapp.